

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, YO

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV NEWSPAPER REPORTEDLY HINTS AT U.S.

---- INVOLVEMENT IN ORLY ATTACK

1. JANUARY 16 EDITION OF NEW YORK TIMES CARRIES PAGE 2
ARTICLE ENTITLED QUOTE YUGOSLAVS HINT U.S. PLOTTED ORLY
ATTACK UNQUOTE. ARTICLE IS DATELINED BELGRADE JANUARY 16
AND ATTRIBUTED TO NEW YORK TIMES WITHOUT BYLINE.

2. TEXT OF ARTICLE, WHICH HAS BEEN SENT TO BELGRADE VIA
SIGNAL, FOLLOWS: QUOTE: ONE OF YUGOSLAVIA'S GOVERNMENT-
CONTROLLED NEWSPAPERS HINTED BROADLY TODAY THAT THE UNITED
STATES MIGHT HAVE BEEN BEHIND A ROCKET ATTACK AT ORLY
AIRPORT AT PARIS ON MONDAY, IN WHICH A YUGOSLAV AIRLINES
WAS DAMAGED.

THE NEWSPAPER, VJESNIK, SAID THAT INASMUCH AS THE PALESTINE
LIBERATION ORGANIZATION HAD RECENTLY CONDEMNED INDIVIDUAL
ACTS OF TERRORISM, CERTAIN "QUESTIONS" HAD ARISEN ABOUT THE
ORLY INCIDENT.

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VJESNIK ASKED WHETHER IT WAS "ONLY BY CHANCE" THAT THE INCIDENT HAD OCCURRED IN FRANCE, AT A TIME WHEN "CERTAIN

CIRCLES IN THE WEST" HAVE SHOWN IRRITATION OVER AMERICAN "THREATS" OF ARMED INTERVENTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

THE NEWSPAPER WENT ON TO SUGGEST THAT THE ROCKET MIGHT HAVE BEEN FIRED AT THE YUGOSLAV PLANE RATHER THAN AT A NEARBY ISRAELI AIRLINER AS ASSUMED, TO "PROVOKE DISSENSION BETWEEN ARABS AND THE NONALIGNED."

YUGOSLAVIA HAS BEEN ACCUSING THE UNITED STATES LATELY, MAINLY IN THE FORM OF PRESS COMMENTARY, OF CARRYING OUT A "WAR OF NERVES" AGAINST THIS COUNTRY. END QUOTE

3. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO CONFIRM ACCURACY OF VJESNIK STORY AS REPORTED BY TIMES. DID VJESNIK ARTICLE SPECIFICALLY CHARGE OR CLEARLY IMPLY U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN ORLY ATTACK? IF SO, WHAT MOTIVES ARE ATTRIBUTED TO U.S. ACTION?

4. WE CONSIDER IMPLICATION OF FINAL PARA OF TIMES STORY SOMEWHAT MISLEADING. ALTHOUGH SOME ELEMENTS OF YUGOSLAV PRESS, E.G. VECERNJE NOVOSTI, AND SEVERAL YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS, E.G. TITO IN NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE AND LCY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POPOVIC, HAVE ALLEGED THERE IS ANTI-YUGOSLAV CAMPAIGN IN WESTERN PRESS, INCLUDING SOME U.S. PAPERS (BELGRADE 0172), YUGOSLAV PRESS AND OFFICIALS HAVE AVOIDED LEVELING SUCH ALLEGATIONS AT USG. KISSINGER

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